

Message Text

SECRET

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60

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 AID-20 TRSE-00 OMB-01 MMS-03 IGA-02

CIAE-00 PM-07 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01

PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-15 RSR-01 /113 W

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R 232050Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY QUITO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8398

INFO SECDEF WASHDC

USCINCSO

JCS

S E C R E T QUITO 4425

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, EC

SUBJECT: ADVISABILITY OF TRANSFERRING USSOUTHCOM FROM
CANAL ZONE

REFS: A) STATE 164406; B) CARACAS 7235

1. RELOCATION OF SOUTHCOM WOULD PROBABLY NOT HAVE
SIGNIFICANT EFFECT ON U.S. RELATIONS WITH ECUADOR NOR ON
ECUADOREAN PERCEPTION OF PANAMA CANAL TREATY ISSUE.

2. AMONG ADVANTAGES ASSOCIATED BY ECUADOREAN MILITARY
WITH PRESENT LOCATION IS NEARBY PRESENCE OF SCHOOL OF
THE AMERICAS AND OTHER TRAINING FACILITIES. AMONG THE
DISADVANTAGES IS THAT, FOR MANY, PRESENT LOCATION OF
SOUTHCOM HAS BECOME UNPOPULAR SYMBOL OF HEMISPHERIC
DEFENSE CONCEPT. GIVEN A CHOICE IN THE MATTER WE
BELIEVE ECUADOREANS WOULD GO DOWN IN FAVOR OF
RELOCATION OF SOUTHCOM TO CONTINENTAL UNITED STATES
(E.G. WASHINGTON) BECAUSE OF WHAT THEY WOULD SEE AS
ENHANCED OPPORTUNITY TO DEAL MORE CLOSELY AND DIRECTLY
WITH OUR CENTRAL MILITARY AUTHORITIES.

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3. ON SEPARATE ISSUE OF CANAL PROTECTION AND DEFENSE,

LEADERS HERE STRONGLY FAVOR PRESENCE OF U.S. MILITARY IN
CANAL ZONE FOR THAT PURPOSE AND WOULD PROBABLY REACT WITH
SOME CONCERN IF THAT ELEMENT OF OUR MILITARY PRESENCE
WERE ABRUPTLY ELIMINATED BEFORE OTHER ADEQUATE ARRANGE-
MENTS HAD BEEN REACHED.

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